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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Celebrating Health

Join HDNW in recognizing the impacts of public health during National Public Health Week

Without public health, life expectancy of Americans could still be 50, as it was in the early 1900s. People would be frequently dying of diseases caused by poor sanitation and unsafe work conditions.

Without public health, diseases such as Polio, Typhoid, and AIDS would still be leading causes of deaths and loss of quality living. Air and water wouldn't be as clean. Tobacco use would still be hindering the health of even those who choose not to smoke.

Without public health, there would be countless more families and children growing up without access to nutritious foods and life-saving vaccinations.

April 3-9 is National Public Health Week. Join us in celebrating the people and programs that have improved life beyond what most residents recognize. Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play.

This year as part of National Public Health Week, health departments throughout Northern Michigan are highlighting the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA), a collaborative team of healthcare agencies and providers spanning 31 northern Lower Peninsula counties. Together, they strengthen health and wellbeing across the region.

Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance represents:

- 7 health departments
- 31 counties
- 829,860 Northern Michigan constituents
- 16,669 square miles of coverage
- 70% rural living

"Rural communities like Northern Michigan can be some of the most vulnerable populations to public health threats," said Dan Thorell, Health Department of Northwest Michigan (HDNW) Health Officer and Alliance member. "Limited resources and the increased need for travel create challenges in accessing healthcare services for our rural residents. Through the Alliance, we work to build and maintain a more robust, inclusive public health system that ensures everyone can access programs that help them live their healthiest, most productive lives."

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

“Public health is an extensive team of caring people who work behind the scenes to prevent, promote, and protect our friends and neighbors from unseen risks,” adds Holly Campbell, HDNW Deputy Health Officer. “Throughout this week, take time to say thank you to your public health workers.”

To learn more about the Alliance, go to <https://nmpublichealthalliance.org>.

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